

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

March 22, 2007

Via Electronic Transmission and Facsimile

The Honorable Michael Wilson
Ambassador of Canada to the United States
Embassy of Canada
501 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ambassador Wilson:

I am writing to you regarding information that I received indicating that the government of Canada is not providing United States law enforcement officials with information that they need to secure our common national border against convicted sex offenders. In 2004, the government of Canada passed laws requiring the creation of a Canadian National Sex Offender Registry that must contain detailed, identifying information on all persons who are convicted in Canada on sex-related criminal charges. Canadian law specifies that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is the agency responsible for creating and maintaining this national sex offender registry.

The official Internet website for the RCMP contains a section concerning the Canadian National Sex Offender Registry. This particular section of the RCMP website contains a statement that seems to jeopardize the safety of the people of the United States. The statement, which is contained in the "Questions and Answers" portion of the RCMP website, is as follows:

Who will have access to the database?

- This database will be accessible by accredited police agencies in every province and territory either directly or indirectly through their Provincial/Territorial Sex Offender Registry (SOR) Centres.
- *US or international police agencies will not have access to the National Sex Offender Database (emphasis added)*

Any reasonable person who accesses the RCMP website and reads this statement will likely recognize that it provides Canadian sex offenders with the strong assurance that if they attempt to enter the United States, they will very likely succeed in doing so. This is the case because the fact that they are convicted sex offenders will not have been made known to the United States.

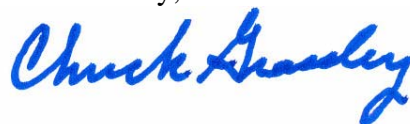
The statutes of the United States make any foreign citizen who has been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude ineligible for admission into the United States. Canadian sex offenders who enter the United States are therefore breaking the laws of this nation. It appears that the RCMP refusing to assist American law enforcement agencies and proclaiming its lack of cooperation to the world. While I am concerned that this statement was posted on the RCMP website, I am even more concerned by what it says about the level of cooperation between our nation's law enforcement agencies. Good neighbors should always warn one another when they discover that a dangerous criminal is roaming their neighborhood. How, then, can the Canadian government in good conscience fail to warn American authorities of the identities and activities of the known rapists and child molesters who may seek to enter the United States?

Each of the 50 American states established a publicly-accessible Internet website that contains identifying information on convicted sex offenders residing in that state. The information on these publicly-available websites could be used by Canadian officials (to the extent allowable under Canadian law) to deny entry to American sex offenders seeking to enter Canada. By contrast, it appears that only two of Canada's provinces have similar publicly available databases.

Given this imbalance, I would be interested in learning from you or your representative, what steps our governments should take to ensure that American law enforcement officials have as much information available to them about Canadian sex offenders as Canadian law enforcement officials have about American sex offenders.

In closing, I appreciate your prompt attention to this important matter and look forward to your reply no later than April 5, 2007. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact Emilia DiSanto or Jason Foster at (202) 224-4515. All correspondence responsive to this request should be sent electronically in PDF format to thomas_novelli@finance-rep.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance

cc: Dr. Condoleezza Rice
U.S. Secretary of State